



IOWA - KOSOVO

2011-2013



President: Atifete Jahjaga
 Prime Min.: Hashim Thaci
 MoD: Agim Ceku
 Amb. to US: Akan Ismaili
 US Amb: Tracey Ann Jacobson
 TAG: MG Timothy Orr

NATO member: No

EU member: No

ISAF Pax: 0 (1/1/13)

2012 SPP Engagements: 9

Population: 1.8M (2012 est.)
 Area: slightly larger than Delaware
 Military Expend.: 0.6% GDP (2011 est.)



Photo by U.S. Air Force

Overview

The Iowa-Kosovo partnership was created on March 11th, 2011 with the long-term goal of developing the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) and fostering mutually-beneficial interests across all levels of society. Establishing a strong relationship with the government of Kosovo, this partnership represents a critical step toward the reform development of Kosovo's security forces along Euro-Atlantic standards.

Partnership History

Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia on Feb. 17, 2008. In its declaration of independence, Kosovo committed to fulfilling its obligations under the plan established by UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari, as a fundamental principle of good governance and to welcome a period of international supervision.[3] United States recognition was immediate and just three years later, Iowa Governor Terry Branstad announced the newly-established partnership between the State of Iowa and the Republic of Kosovo. "I am delighted to announce the establishment of a State Partnership Program with the Republic of Kosovo, a great friend to the United States and a place with which our Guardsmen and women are already familiar through service in NATO's Kosovo force," Branstad said. "The State Partnership Program is a longstanding and important program, which will benefit both our Iowa National Guard and the Kosovo Security Force."

Iowa has a special relationship with Kosovo as more than 700 Iowa National Guardsmen and women have been stationed there as part of peacekeeping missions since 2003. Additionally, the Iowa National Guard's public affairs office states that it has been the tradition of Iowa soldiers serving in Kosovo to also engage in nation-building activities on their personal time, such as teaching students English and helping with other types of community betterment projects.

The first major partnership event between Iowa and Kosovo involved the Iowan National Guard's Regional Training Institute spending more than two weeks in Kosovo teaching the first Kosovo Security Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Course. "This course was in development when the NCO leadership of Iowa visited Kosovo in September," Army CSM Rachel Fails said. "So, it did a couple things for us besides give us, the state partner, information and knowledge of the KSF. It really is the first step in building that relationship – a personal relationship that three years, four years, five years from now we're still going to be here and we're going to keep building here."

In fiscal year 2012, Iowa and Kosovo participated in 9 different SPP events, including a KSF Medical Readiness event, a KSF SR NCO Refresher Course, KSF visit to Iowa, and a Senior Leader Visit to Kosovo.

In September 2012, a particularly important step in furthering the already strong relationship was taken when Iowa sent a military service member to work fulltime in Kosovo to help coordinate projects between the two countries.



Photo by Capt. Elizabeth Culbertson



"This [partnership] is very significant to the Iowa National Guard. As we grow and learn together, I think we can help each other with the challenges that we have and we really look forward to a great future."
- MG Timothy Orr, Adjutant General, Iowa National Guard

Partnership Focus

The focus for 2013 is:

- Ambassador visit to DSM: 14-15 NOV 2012
- Company Level Pre Command Seminar: 8-22 DEC 2012
- NCO Policy and Strategy Development: 8-15 DEC 2012
- Emergency OPS Contingency Planning: FAM – 21-25 JAN 2013
- NCO Development Program: 2-9 FEB 2013
- Staff NCO Development/Directorate Survey: 2-9 MAR 2013
- COMKSF SR Leader Visit: 8-15 APR 2013
- Firefighting TCT/FAM: 11-18 APR 2013
- TAG IA Visit: 22-29 JUN 2013
- Officer/NCO Roles & Responsibilities: 8-22 JUN 2013
- Garrison Command: 8-22 JUN 2013
- Disaster Management Response Shadow: 10-16 JUL 2013
- Utilization of a CSM: 7-14 SEP 2013
- Leader Book Development: 14-21 SEP 2013

Way Ahead

- Create and Develop an NCO Corps
- Create Domestic Operations
- Improve overall readiness of the Kosovo Security Forces

Discussions of future events include the possible inclusion of Kosovo participants in the Best Warrior competition held each spring in Iowa as well as agricultural exchange and economic ventures.

Establishing a strong relationship with the government of Kosovo, this partnership represents a critical step toward the reform development of Kosovo's security forces along Euro-Atlantic standards.

